***Session 7 The Sin of the World (Jn. 15:18)****“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)*

1. overview

*Go ahead and turn your Bibles to* ***John 15****. How many of you were here last week? Okay, cool. I just want to make sure where you guys were at because I’m aiming for you again. No, no, let’s pray.* ***John 15****. Father, we thank You for Your Word. Father, thank You that You are the Savior of our souls, Lord. You sent Your Son. You so loved the world, You gave Your darling Son, Father, to die, to shed His blood. Father, we ask You for the Spirit of revelation, Lord, to touch our hearts, to touch our minds. Lord, that You would connect us more and more, Father, with Your ways, Your understanding, Your assessment, Your wisdom, Your leadership. Father, open up our eyes to Your law. Open up Your Word. Father, touch our hearts. Lord, take the treasures, Father, that are hidden in Your Son’s heart, Father, by Your Spirit, You’d make these precious things known to our hearts, in Jesus name, Amen.*

*Well,* ***John 15****, I just want to kind of give a second part to what we talked about last week. In* ***John 15:18****, Jesus makes a very powerful statement, and it’s powerful when we actually stop and ponder the implications of what it is that He is saying. When we just read it casually we can kind of gloss over the statement, but He’s making a very strong statement.*

*It’s a very uncomfortable statement. At least, to me, it is. As I stop and ponder what it is He’s saying, I go, “Ah, Lord, are You sure You mean hate?”* ***John 15:8****, He goes, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.” You go, “Lord, are You sure it’s not the world just disagrees with You?” He goes, “No, its hate.” “Are You sure it’s not like well they don’t really like You?” He goes, “No, it’s way more intense than that.” It is an important subject because there are three to four occasions in* ***John 13-17*** *where Jesus tells us the reason why He’s giving His instruction.*

*For instance, in* ***verse 17****, He says, “These things I command you that you would love one another.” Now, there’s two ways to look at that statement. I think they’re both valid. Number one, there’s a general way to look at the statement meaning He’s saying, “These things. What I’m instructing you in* ***John 13-17****, I’m instructing you these things. I’m commanding you these things so that you would love.” Or we can look at the previous statements right before it, and go, “Oh, I’m telling you these things,” and He’s talking about abiding, abiding in the Vine, abiding in the Word. He goes, “I’m commanding you these things so that you would love one another.”*

*Then from* ***verses 18-27****, He gives another series of instructions. Then in* ***16:1****, He gives yet again a conclusion of why it is that He is giving the instruction. He says, “These things I have spoken to you so that you would not stumble.” So, in the section that we are focusing on these last two weeks, the instruction that Jesus gives us is absolutely essential. It is essential that we would not stumble.*

* 1. In John 13-17, one of Jesus’ aims is to equip the heart to stay steady under pressure. Jesus exhorted the disciples two days earlier that the church was to not be troubled in light of unfolding global eschatological pressures that point towards the end of the age drawing near.

6“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Mt. 24:5-6)

*Paragraph A, the purpose of* ***John 13-17****, this is a brief overview from last week, is to equip our hearts to be steady in the midst of the end-time pressures, or the eschatological pressures that will unfold. Again, in* ***Matthew 24****, a familiar passage, Jesus gives line upon line insight of the social dynamics, the health dynamics, the environmental dynamics, the political dynamics, the spiritual dynamics that will take place in the generation of His return. These dynamics will create a pressure, and they will be cause for fear. So, Jesus says, “Look, you will hear of these things, and these things will happen. See to it that you are not troubled.”*

*So, He gives an exhortation, and really a commandment to not walk in fear. Two days later, Jesus gives the instruction of* ***John 13-17****, and in* ***John 14****, He starts out with “let not your hearts be troubled.” Later on in* ***verse 27****, He says it again. “See to it that you are not troubled.” I believe that what Jesus is doing, He is picking up on the conversation of* ***Matthew 24:6*** *where He says, “Do not be troubled,” and then in* ***John 14*** *and on He begins to give instructions of how we can…instruction in terms of the access that we have to the relationship with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit that we have access to that relationship. We have access to Their presence.*

*We can interact with Them in, and in that interaction, we call that intimacy. There are very powerful dynamics of peace, righteousness, and joy that become a part of our emotional experience, thus, bringing a stabilizing factor to our hearts, and to our minds in the midst of the unfolding pressures. It’s what the prophet Isaiah in* ***Isaiah 40****, again a familiar passage, is referring to when he says “those who wait on the Lord.” In other words, those who are actively engaging with the Father in that place of intimacy. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, entering into that Trinitarian dialogue that we’ve talked about starting with* ***chapter 14****.*

*That when we engage in this, there is a strength that is released in the human heart. It says that those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. So that’s one of the main aims here in* ***John 13-17****. So, when Jesus talks in* ***John 16:1****, that is the thing that’s on His mind is that there will be a stability in the human heart lest we fall away. One of the uncomfortable subjects, and it’s a broad subject not one that we can go into in its entirety tonight, but* ***2 Thessalonians*** *makes it very clear that there must come a falling away.*

*I believe there are those who name the name of Jesus that will end up forsaking the faith because of the pressures, but more specifically, which what we’re looking at last weekend and tonight, because they have broken their agreement with God’s assessment, and evaluation, and narrative of the human race.*

* 1. A troubled heart weighed down with worry and anxiety is a serious matter. It hinders the growth of ***joy*** and ***peace*** in our hearts. Worry preoccupies us with managing our emotions, making it difficult to step out of our feelings and narratives to fully ***love*** others in truth.

*Paragraph B, a troubled heart is weighed down with worry. So, anxiety, it is a serious matter. It is a cause of, and will be a cause, it is a cause and will be a cause of much mental illness. Now, I’ve got to give a qualifier. There are those who because of physiological reasons battle with anxiety. So, there are medical interactions there, but that is not the majority of the human race. The majority of the human race battle really with the sin of anxiety. It says in* ***Proverbs 12:25****, it says that an anxious heart causes depression. An anxious heart causes depression.*

*So, when Jesus is saying, “Hey, do not be troubled,” He’s giving a warning. He’s giving a caution. He’s giving an exhortation, and He’s really guiding us to protect really our mental health that will be threatened because of all the different dynamics that are taking place at the end of the age. Worry, the nature of worry is such that it actually preoccupies us with managing our emotions, making it difficult to step out of our own feelings, and to step out of our own perspectives and narratives, keeping us from fully being able to give ourselves to loving those who are around us in truth. It says in* ***Matthew 13*** *that worry, the worries of this world, it actually chokes out the Word. It snuffs out the life that God’s Word produces in our hearts.*

*It hinders the growth of joy and peace and love within our hearts. So, the issue of worry is a serious matter, and I spent a significant amount of time talking about this last week. It makes it difficult for us to love in truth. It keeps us drunk so to speak in our own narratives, and our own sense of perspective. We lose our discernment and sense of reality when anxiety actually begins to take over. Anxiety gets exposed and it gets stirred up when our human limitations get exposed. In other words, what happens is we get faced with a crisis, a difficult circumstance, or with an accusation, an assessment from someone else.*

* 1. Worry is simply rooted in pride. It exists because we have bought into an exaggerated sense of confidence in our human ***abilities***, ***assessment*** and ***narratives***, thus not living in truth—reality. Anxiety gets stirred up when our human limitations are exposed and our assessment and narratives or our mindsets (strongholds) in which we find safety get challenged.

4For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds… (2 Cor. 10:4)

*What happens is that to the measure that our assessments, our narratives, our confidence is in our own abilities, it is to that measure that when we get confronted with something that exposes the frailty of our abilities, it exposes the frailty of our perspective and it exposes the frailty of our own narratives, that’s when fear actually begins to settle in.*

*There’s a passage, again that I’m sure most of you have heard. It’s* ***2 Corinthians 10:4****, where the Apostle Paul speaking of his preaching ministry, he says, “Look, as a preacher of the gospel, I’m not just merely giving information. I’m actually engaged in warfare through the ministry of preaching.” He says, “And here’s what happens when we are speaking the gospel. It begins to tear down strongholds.” These strongholds that he’s talking about, he’s talking about mindsets, but I’ve always found it curious that Paul would use that language. When he’s talking about strongholds, he’s talking about fortresses. He’s talking about these military forts where people would go and hide for the purpose of safety. Forts, they offer us protection. They offer us safety. They offer us stability. They offer us provision. There are things that happen in forts.*

*I think it is a worthy exercise for us to really begin thinking about the implications of Paul using that word because it actually will help us understand that there are mindsets that we have that we actually must let go of. The truth of the stronghold, what it does, it shows us that we actually find safety in our mindsets. Now, I’m going to say something here. There’s a lot of talk these days about, “Oh, I don’t feel safe.” Now, there’s some real physical reasons why people don’t feel safe. That needs to be considered. There’s things that need to be taken into consideration. The way that we interact with one another.*

*There’s a Christian kindness, and love. So, I’m not undermining that, but this idea of feeling safe has so exploded in the culture, and has entered into the church. It all has to do with how we feel, but here’s the point. Could it be because we are having interactions where our strongholds are being challenged? So, the feeling of lack of safety is actually real, but the problem is not, now let’s go strengthen the fortress. It is find another one. It’s called truth. Some of you right now are going, “I’m not quite sure if I’m feeling safe right now with you saying all this.”*

*No, but strongholds, they are the things that offer us safety. We find safety in our opinions. We find safety in our perspectives, our narratives, the way that we see things. It’s a huge subject, but beloved, the Scripture makes it clear our mindsets offer us safety. It’s false safety, but it offers us safety. So, what it does, it really sheds light on why the Old Testament, in particular, talks so much about the name of the Lord is a strong tower. God is our refuge, a very present help in the time of trouble where God is the fortress, and by God meaning the ways of God, the wisdom of God, the presence of God, our interaction with God. So, it’s all of who He is to us that is our fortress. That is our safety. Coming into agreement with His ways. Coming into agreement with His thoughts as found within the context of the Word of God.*

*So, what is happening in* ***John 15****, again* ***18-27****. We’ll look at that more in just a few moments. Jesus is giving us some very, very important insight. It’s been my observation that as things are unfolding, more and more people definitely within the culture, but even within the church, are breaking their agreement with Jesus’ assessment of the world. Jesus is saying, “Look, if you don’t cling and come into agreement with My assessment, look, there is a surprise that will await you, and you will trip up. I don’t want you to trip up. That’s why I’m telling you this about the world.”*

* 1. Over the last several decades there has been an increasing and growing presence of another gospel in the Body of Christ. It centers specifically around the nature of God as a righteous Judge as well as the nature of sinful humanity as rebellious children of wrath.

4For if he who comes preaches another Jesus … or a different gospel which you have not accepted. (2 Cor. 11:4)

*Over the last several decades, I’ve observed an increasing and a growing presence of another gospel. The Scripture talks about another gospel.* ***Galatians 1:6*** *talks about a different gospel.* ***2 Corinthians 11:4*** *talks about another Jesus, a different spirit, a different gospel than that which has been presented to us. The seeds of this different gospel, again, it’s very subtle. Very, very subtle. What it does, it centers around several things, but for our purposes tonight, it centers around two things. Number one, the nature of God as a righteous judge. Secondly, the nature of sinful humanity as rebellious children of wrath.*

* 1. In John 16:1, Jesus states that the reason why He taught His disciples John 15:18-27 was to help them make sense of the true condition of the world and context in which they would witness. Not agreeing with heaven’s perspective concerning the condition of the world will be a source of stumbling for many. Presently, there are growing seeds of this in this generation.

1“These things I have spoken to you, that you ﻿should not be made to stumble.” (Jn. 16:1)

3…for that Day (2nd Coming) will not come unless the falling away comes first. (2 Th. 2:3)

* 1. I have observed a subtle but increased breaking of agreement with the Lord’s primary assessment of the human race as sinful. I have seen this through the increased emphasis of our brokenness instead of our sinfulness, as well as brokenness, as the reason for sinful behavior. This has resulted in a growing presence of a ‘therapeutic gospel’ instead of the gospel of grace.

18“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19… the world would love its own … you are not of the world… I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” (Jn. 15:18–19)

*What has happened, let’s go to paragraph F, is this subtle breaking of agreement with the Lord’s primary assessment of the human race as sinful is manifesting through the increased emphasis of our brokenness as opposed to our sinfulness. That doesn’t mean that there isn’t brokenness.* ***Psalm 147:3****, He heals the brokenhearted.* ***Luke 4:18****, He has the anointing that He’s releasing to heal the brokenhearted. Emotionally trauma, and all these unfortunate realties are very, very real, but the Scripture does not present our brokenness as the primary reason why we do silly things.*

*So, the increased emphasis on brokenness instead of our sinfulness, as well as brokenness being the reason for our sinful behavior. Now, life is much more complex than that, so, our sinfulness and our brokenness, yes, they’re interfaced there, but it says behold the Lamb of God who takes what? The sin of the world. Not the brokenness of the world. The sin of the world, because if all we were was broken and wounded, you need a therapist, not a Savior. When Jesus died on the cross, it was a payment for sin. The sins that we committed. The sins that we said yes to, as well as the sins committed against us that yes, have resulted in woundedness. If brokenness and wounding is our primary orientation, it will always be somebody else’s fault.*

*Again, as I mentioned last week, one of the most you know troubling books in the Bible, and again, we don’t think of it as troubling because you know we’ve seen a few Cecil B. DeMille movies on the Ten Commandments, and Moses, and the Prince of Egypt. It’s kind of cool, and you know heard some of the stuff in Sunday school, and some really amazing stories. We don’t stop and think about part of what the message of the book of* ***Exodus*** *is. It’s actually quite like, man, like ouch, because here’s what He’s saying in* ***Exodus****:*

*He’s looking at these slaves, these Hebrew slaves that are being oppressed by the Egyptian empire, and He releases His supernatural power to deliver these slaves. He brings them out of Egypt, and they’re free. You know, the Red Sea destroys the most powerful military around at that time. They’re in the wilderness, and while they’re in the wilderness, they get the most intense surprise. God gives them the Law, and the Law looks them square in the eye and says, “You are no different than your former slave masters.” They’re like, “Cough, cough, come again?” He goes, “Yeah, you’re no different than them.” It’s like oh, man. Beloved, this is intense. Okay, we’ve got three more pages. Oh Lord, help me.*

1. Understanding the usage of the word “world” in john’s gospel

*Let’s go to page 2. Again, God heals the brokenhearted, and He’s tender with us, but the core issue, the core problem with all of us, all eight billion humans, is the core issue of sin. So, we came into the born-again experience. That doesn’t make us better than the world, it just makes us freed from the power of sin, and we were given the power of the Holy Spirit to live inside of us. We are then given the opportunity through the born-again experience to walk out our emancipation from darkness and evil.*

*Paragraph 2, in* ***John 15:8****, you know Jesus talks about remembering He says if the world hated you, remember it hated Me first. I just want to take a moment and talk about how the gospel of* ***John*** *uses the word “world.” The Apostle* ***John****, you know there are four gospels. Depending on who you read, they’ll say that the gospel of* ***John*** *that 80-90% of the information in the gospel of* ***John*** *is unique to the gospel of* ***John****.* ***Matthew****,* ***Mark****,* ***Luke****, and* ***John*** *have a lot of overlapping stories. John, 80-90% of it is unique to the gospel of* ***John****.* ***John*** *brings a different lens as it were by the Holy Spirit to the table. He uses the word “world” in a very, very specific way.*

* 1. In John 15:18-27, Jesus gives us critically important instruction concerning the condition of the world and our need for the engagement and activity of the Spirit to break through. The world is under the influence of deep darkness and deception. Paul makes it clear that there is a demonic veil on the minds of humans for the purpose hindering the perception of the gospel.

4whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (2 Cor. 4:4)

26“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” (Jn. 15:26)

*Now, paragraph A.,* ***John 15:18-27****, Jesus gives us critically important information and instruction concerning the condition of the world, and our need for engagement with the activity of the Holy Spirit. Those are the two things He hits in these* ***ten verses****. He hits on the condition of the world, and He hits the need for Holy Spirit engagement, and the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit to break in to deal with the condition of the world. We find that in* ***John*** *that the world is under the influence of deep darkness and deception.*

*The Apostle Paul, he makes it clear that there is a demonic veil over the minds of humanity.* ***2 Corinthians 4:4****, he makes it very clear. He says that the god of this age has darkened the minds of the unbelieving world. There literally is a demonic, satanically energized veil on the minds of the unbelieving world. Now, before we get a little too self-righteousness over here, in* ***2 Corinthians 11****, Paul kind of says, “And that veil has kind of crept into the church as well, again.” In other words, there is a real war over here.*

*What’s the purpose of this veil? The purpose of this veil is to hinder the perception of the gospel, to hinder the understanding of the knowledge of God.* ***2 Corinthians 4****, right there, Paul says, “Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God should shine on them.” In* ***John 15:26****, after Jesus talks about the condition and the response of the world, He says but when the Helper comes, He will testify concerning Me. That is the greatest need that we have within the church, and it’s the greatest need that we have for the world.*

*It is the release of the Holy Spirit activity to testify concerning the Son of God. The biggest battle, this is stuff that always gets me into trouble, but these Bible verses are stubborn. The biggest battle, let’s just kind of focus in on our country, is not who is in office. This biggest battle…it’s not. The biggest battle is not that our Constitution is under siege. That is not the biggest battle. We can get all the war, and we can get the Constitution fully restored, and the right guy in office. There is still a problem, and that is this: Satan is breathing Luciferian darkness on the minds of the unbelieving world. There’s no amount of natural legislation that can break through that veil except the power of the Spirit breaking in testifying and speaking concerning the Son of God. I could qualify what I just said, but I’m not in the mood.*

* 1. Jesus taught His disciples that the Spirit comes and speaks of Him and thus they are to do the same. Paul speaks of this to the Corinthians, explaining to them that our witness and proclaiming of Jesus is the only way the light of God will come and break through dark minds.

27 “And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” (Jn. 15:27)

5For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord … 6For it is the God … who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:5–6)

*Paragraph B., Jesus taught His disciples something very, very important. He taught His disciples that the Spirit is, when He comes, He’s going to speak about Jesus. Isn’t that interesting? He said when the Spirit comes, He said, “He’s going to talk about Me,” and then in* ***verse 27****, He says, “and you will do the same.” In other words, one of the marks of someone being under the operation of the Holy Spirit is they will speak about the Son of God. They will testify about the Son of God.*

*Paul speaks of the same thing to the church in Corinth.****2 Corinthians 4:4****, he says that the god of this age, he says darkened the minds of the unbelieving lest the light of the gospel would break in, but then in* ***verse 5*** *Paul says therefore, we don’t preach ourselves.* ***Verse 6*** *because it is the…sorry.* ***Verse 5****, he said we don’t preach ourselves, but we preach Jesus. In other words, we testify concerning the Son of God because the Spirit is testifying concerning the Son of God. We testify concerning the Son of God.* ***Verse 6****, here’s why because when you talk about Jesus, light actually breaks in.*

*Now, think about this. Even in this room earlier we were singing worship songs, and we’re singing to God, to Jesus, about Jesus. Beloved, there was light entering into the room whether you saw it or not, and it was touching your mind. Some of you came in tonight just kind of going, “Bah, I don’t even know if I want to do this anymore, and now you’re happy again.” You’re like, “Man, I love You, Jesus.” Well, because light broke through the darkness that was plaguing your mind when you walked in, but not only that, as we were together singing to Jesus, singing about Jesus, light was actually touching this area, this region.*

*Paul says that when we declare Christ and who He is, when we testify of the Son of God in cooperation with the Spirit, Paul makes an outrageous statement. Look what he says here in* ***verse 6****. He says for it is the God who commanded light to shine in the darkness is the same One who causes the light that shines in the face of Christ to shine upon their hearts. In other words, He’s saying this, when you preach Jesus, what will happen to the human heart is what happened in* ***Genesis 1*** *when the earth was filled with darkness, and God says let there be light and there was light.*

*There is a powerful, creative, which later on in* ***2 Corinthians 5*** *is called the new creation. There is a powerful, creative,* ***Genesis 1*** *creative dynamic that takes place when we speak and testify of Jesus along…in cooperation with the Holy Spirit that breaks through the veil that’s on the minds of those that are around us, including our own.*

* 1. Whereas most of the New Testament speaks more in terms of the condition and culture of this age or era, John refers to the ‘world’, the cosmos, in a specific way. The world is the realm that was invaded by the power of evil, inhabited by humans who are in enmity with God and under the influence of Satan, the prince and power of the air or the god of this age (era).

12Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned... (Rom. 5:12)

*Paragraph C, whereas most of the New Testament speaks more in terms of the condition of the culture, or this age, or this era, this time period in which we live,* ***John*** *talks more about the world or the cosmos in a very, very specific way. Most of the apostles talk about the influence of darkness in the culture, but John says something far more intense than this. He goes no, actually the world is the realm that has been invaded by the power of evil, number one. Number two, that realm is inhabited by human beings who hate God, every single one of them.*

*Thirdly, not only has the realm been invaded by the power of evil, not only is the realm inhabited by human beings who hate God, every single one of them, not just one….now, if you’re born again, things begin to happen in your heart, and you’re loving Jesus, but before you were born again, you weren’t loving Jesus. The third thing is that realm is under the influence of Satan himself, the god of this age, the presence of the power of the air, as the Scripture says.* ***Romans 5:12****, therefore, just as through one man, here it is, sin entered the world, and then death entered through sin, and thus death spread through all men, Paul says.*

*What is the death that he’s talking about? He’s talking about the death of everything. It’s not just us dying physically, that’s part of it, but it’s dying physically. It’s growing old. It’s things breaking, why eventually, we need a new car. Things just break. It’s why when we meet new relationships, we’re all excited meeting each other. Deep down inside, we’re going haha, when is our first fight? You know that nervous feeling. Is this one going to last? So, the death is all comprehensive. It’s why your dog dies. It’s why trees die. It’s why that turtle that lives for 900 years eventually will die.*

*It’s why stars implode, and things collide. Stuff doesn’t work the way we want it to work. Stuff doesn’t last when we want it to last. That’s why the greatest news in the Bible, I mean there’s lots of good news in the Bible, is in* ***Revelation 21*** *where He says, “Behold, I will make all things new.” He goes there is a time when the power of death will not only be broken off of our physically bodies in the resurrection. He goes no, the entire cosmos will be swallowed up in the power of the resurrection.*

*I’m going to say this again. That the glory of the gospel is not just that you and I will not die if we have our faith in Christ. Like it says in* ***John 11****, though you die, you will live because He’s the Resurrection. Yes, praise the Lord. We will have resurrected bodies, but beloved, that is not the end of the story. What the Scripture suggests is that, hear me, the entire created order will be swallowed up in the power of the resurrection. The sun, the moon, the stars, the universe, the entire thing will be brought into the everlasting newness of God, where nothing ever grows old, and there is no law of entropy.*

* 1. The influence of evil in the world is such that we are not merely broken but rather slaves of evil. It required Jesus to come and give His life as a ransom, which is required to free captives. The Bible paints a dire present picture of the condition of the world. If it was not for the intervention of Jesus on the cross and His return, humans would utterly be destroyed.

22And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; ﻿but for the ﻿elect’s sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:22)

*Paragraph D, the influence of evil in the world is such that we are not just merely broken, but rather we are slaves to evil. Humanity is enslaved to evil. That’s why in* ***Mark 10:42****, again the Bible doesn’t exaggerate, and it’s very intentional with its language. It says the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as what? A ransom for many. A ransom is only necessary if you’re trying to buy out someone who has been kidnapped, or held hostage, or held prisoner, or enslaved. Christ came to pay the ransom to set free slaves from the power of evil. Again, it’s required by Jesus to come, and to give His life as a ransom.*

* 1. The situation and direction of the world due to sin and evil is hopeless and insurmountable. Yet, the scripture also promised great hope and that God would triumph over evil. We see that God would triumph over evil in the most surprising way, which is the 2nd Person of the Trinity, the Son, becomes a Man to lay down His life to make payment for the sin dilemma in the world.

*Paragraph E, which is required to free captives. The Bible paints, here it is. I want you to catch this. The Bible paints a dire present picture of the condition of the world. It does not paint a pretty picture of the condition of the world in which we live. It doesn’t. It is dark, under the sway of evil, under the influence of demonic forces, filled with cute little kids who play soccer league, who hate God.*

*One of the things about the end of the age as the return of the Lord draws nigh, is that He actually pulls back the lid and He lets this darkness actually come into full expression, and that’s one of the reasons why people are like, “I think this hate thing’s a little too intense.” The Lord goes, “No, I know what’s in here. You don’t see it yet, but the gospel makes it very clear that righteousness and wickedness will grow up into maturity together.” There will come a full expression of this hatred and we will change our story when it happens.*

*Better yet, Jesus says, “I think it’s better if you believe it now, because if you don’t there will be a surprise waiting for you. These things I’m telling you so that you would not stumble.” Again, the scripture paints a dire picture of the condition of the world. In fact, if it wasn’t for the intervention of Jesus dying on the cross, number one, and if it wasn’t for the promise of His second coming, the human race would utterly wipe itself out in hatred and anger and sin.*

*Jesus said it this way, about the end of the age, He says, “And unless these days were shortened, no flesh would be saved.” Part of that is because of the kind of the judgments, but it’s not just that. It’s because of the rage of humanity that He is allowed to come into full maturity.*

*Paragraph E. The situation and, again, the direction of the world, due to sin and evil, hear me out, is hopeless and it’s insurmountable, yet, paragraph E., the scripture also promises us great hope in that God would triumph over evil through the person of Christ Jesus dying on the cross, buried, raised from the dead, ascended, sitting at the right hand of God, pouring out His Spirit, bringing people into the born-again experience, and in the fullness of time, coming in the fullness of His glory to utterly eradicate evil from the earth.*

*We see in the scripture that God triumphs over evil in the most surprising way. You know, the Old Testament shows us a God full of glory, great power, beauty, majesty, wisdom, contending with humanity insofar as their unrighteousness and wickedness and evil, and He says to the prophets, “You wait and see. I’m going to turn this thing around.”*

*The prophets are going, “Okay, we’re saying it, but we don’t get it.”* ***1 Peter*** *it says they were looking, searching out what manner of time, how was God going to do this? And like the most brilliant master storywriter, which a good story always has a good surprise, is He does the unthinkable, beloved. He becomes a man. He becomes a man. He becomes one of us. He enters into the world that has been invaded by sin, surrounded by God haters, under the sway of the God of this age who himself targeted Him to tempt Him, to sway Him. He entered into the realm of darkness. He remained sinless, died on the cross, and He defeated Satan in that moment. That’s why the gospel is good news. That is why we have hope. That’s why there is brightness in the most dire, insurmountable of circumstances called the evil of this world.*

* 1. Jesus as a Man (Jn. 1:14) confronts the dilemma of the whole of creation (Isa. 53:4-5) by paying for our judgment (Rom. 3:25), triumphing over and confronting evil (Col. 2:14-15; Rev. 5:4-7).

29“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (Jn. 1:29)

*Paragraph F. Jesus, as a man, in* ***John 1:14****, He confronts the dilemma of all of creation by paying for our judgment and triumphing over and confronting evil. One of the most powerful statements that was ever uttered by a human being was John the Baptist when he says, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the brokenness”—I’m sorry—"who takes away the sin of this world.”*

1. sin: the willfull insistance to go our own way

3But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. (2 Cor. 4:3–5)

*Page 3. So, what is sin? What is sin? I believe that where we end up insofar as our answer to this question, is critical. Where we end with the answer to the question of what is sin is critical. Sin, in short, is the willful insistence to go our own way, emphasis on willful. It is the willful insistence to go our own way.*

* 1. The general human perspective is rooted in the idea of the good of humanity and that we are positioned to fix the things that are wrong. This is not consistent with the gospel, which suggests otherwise. As humans we have no ***ability*** to save ourselves, our ***assessment*** of the human condition is flawed and our ***narrative*** about the eternal destiny of the wicked is off. The gospel declares there is only one Man, Jesus, who is fully God, who can save the world.

12﻿Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

*Paragraph A. The general human perspective is rooted in the idea that humanity is good. That is the general human perspective, that humans are good, or that humanity is good, number one, and number two, that we are in the position to fix the things that are wrong. By the way, it’s why there is so much anxiety, because, deep down inside, more and more, there is confirmation that things are not as good as we think that they are, thus exposing our ability, our perspectives and our narratives. When those three things get exposed, fear and anxiety begin to kick in.*

*The idea of the good of humanity and that we are in a position to fix the things that are wrong is not consistent with the gospel. The gospel declares that only one Man, Jesus, fully man, fully God, can save the world.* ***Act 4:12****. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given to men, by which we may be saved.*

* 1. The study of sin is called hamartiology which wrestles with the origins and nature of sin. There’s an often-asked philosophical question, ***“If God created everything, yet he did not create evil, then where did sin come from?”*** Where we land on the answer to this is critical.

*It’s a fancy term, there in paragraph B., hamartiology, which is the study of sin. It wrestles with the origin and the nature of sin. The often-asked philosophical question is this: If God created everything, but He did not create evil, then where did sin come from? And where we land on that answer is critical.*

* 1. Sin is the willful insistence of humans to follow their own ways and rules. Sin came into operation when Lucifer chose himself over God’s leadership, and it entered the world when Adam and Eve chose to do the same. Sin has to do with the exaltation of the self-life over God.

*Paragraph C., as I mentioned earlier, sin is the willful insistence of humans to follow their own ways and rules. So, in short, sin came into operation when Lucifer chose himself over the leadership of God and it entered into the world when Adam and Eve chose to do the same. It’s not that there was this outside, abstract force that they could choose. It wasn’t like there was some, quote, unquote, sinful action out there like immorality that they could choose. No. It was they were faced with a choice, and the choice was this: do I trust and follow God’s leadership or do I establish and follow my own? And therein, beloved, lies the very nature of sin. Sin has to do with the exaltation of the self-life over God.*

*I’m going to say this again. Sin has to do with the exaltation of the self-life over God. It’s like Jesus made this statement that, truth be told, it would not surprise me, I’m not trying to be critical here, but it wouldn’t surprise me if many of you have not heard a message on this next verse I’m about to mention in a very long time, and it’s this verse. Jesus says, “If anyone desires to follow Me,” he must what? “Deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me,” because Jesus, right then and there, in that statement, He’s getting to the core issue of sin, the issue of self, and, beloved, if don’t understand that it’s about the issue of self, there will be a bunch of people who will measure their lives based upon what they did or didn’t do and become guilty of the sin of the Pharisees, which is why Jesus looked at the Pharisees and He goes, “Look. On the outside you look squeaky clean. You never pay your taxes late. It’s all on time. You’ve never been late for an appointment in your life. You don’t cuss, you don’t curse, but I, the Lord thy God, I can look in the inside of your self-life and there’s a cemetery on the inside.” It’s the issue of the self-life.*

* 1. Sin is the denying of God and the choosing of anything other than Him and His ways. Sin entered Satan when he chose himself as supreme. Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve responded to Satan’s temptation, and they chose themselves supreme above God. The problem of sin is self. It is for this reason that Jesus declares such a fierce war on our egotism.

﻿ ﻿24Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” (Mt. 16:24)

*The problem of sin is the issue of self. You know, there’s a term out there and it’s a term that’s kind of like the trendy term to say these days. I heard it today. “That guy’s a narcissist.” I’m like, “Welcome to the human race.” I mean, I have to admit, some kind of took it to the next level, but the point is that this issue of love of self, exaltation of self, the absorption of self, the dependence on self, the gratification of self, the governance of self, the establishment of self, the propagating of self, the expression of self. Just be yourself. You caught that?*

*It is for this reason that Jesus declares such fierce war on egotism. I’m not talking about your personality. I’m not talking about your talents; I’m not talking about just basic human desires of wanting to have a family and all these different things. No. We’re talking about the pursuing.*

* 1. Another way to say egotism is unbelief, which is when we cling more to our own ***assessments***, ***narratives,*** and ***abilities*** as the means of our happiness and pleasure. The problem with sin is unbelief – it was denying the existence of the true God. In many ways, sin entered the world once Adam and Eve began to believe the word of the serpent over the word of God.

9… God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. (Gen 2:9)

6So when the woman ﻿saw that the tree was good for food, that it was ﻿pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit ﻿and ate. (Gen. 3:6)

*Let’s go to paragraph E. Another way of saying egotism is unbelief, because it all has to do with self-reliance, which is when we cling to our assessments, narratives and abilities, here it is, as the means of our happiness and pleasure. The problem with sin is unbelief.*

*But unbelief is not merely, “Oh, I doubt it.” When we walk in unbelief in our relationship with God, we are declaring that our way is better, and therein lies our confidence. I mentioned that it is clinging to our own ways as the means of happiness and pleasure. Let’s look for a moment, there’s two verses right there.* ***Genesis 2:9****. It says, “God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight, good for food.”* ***Genesis 3:6****, “When the woman saw the tree, that it was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, desirable.” We’re talking about issue of pleasure, and Adam and Eve said, “You know what? We want that which is good, we want that which is pleasant, we want that which is desirable,” and God wants us to have that which is good, desirable and pleasant. He really does. In fact, one of the verses in the very page is* ***Psalm 36:8****. The Lord says that you will be abundantly satisfied with the rivers of His pleasure. In His presence is fullness of joy. At His right hand there are pleasures forevermore. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God like it says in the* ***Psalms****.* ***John 7*** *says He who thirsts, let Him come and drink and thirst no more.*

*Many, many passages talk about God’s desire to satisfy us.* ***Psalm 90:14****. “Oh, will you satisfy us early according to Your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad in You.” God wants to satisfy us, so it’s not the issue of not wanting the things that are good, pleasant, and desirable, it is that God has a way in how He wants us to go about it, and Adam and Eve chose their way and therein came sin. That’s when sin entered into the world.*

* 1. God did not create sin, however, He gave humanity the dignity of choice, as love cannot exist without the glorious operation and dignity of choice. God gave humanity the choice to either follow Him in love or to choose ourselves above Him and His ways. Pride is a serious issue.

13“For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the ﻿fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:13)

*Paragraph F. God did not create sin; however, He did give humanity the dignity of choice, as love cannot exist without the glorious operation and the dignity of choice. God gave humanity the choice to either follow Him in love or to choose ourselves above Him and His ways. Pride is a serious thing.*

*I never thought I would sound like an old guy, but here I go. It hit me one day. You know, one of the things about living over time is you actually get a perspective, and I noticed one thing one day I went, “Huh. That’s interesting.” It dawned me there’s a phrase that I've not heard for a very, very long time. I’m talking about for years. And the phrase that I've been hearing a lot more has been something like this, “Man, that wounded me. Man, that wounded me. That traumatized me. That triggered me.” And then it hit me one day. Back when I was younger there was a different phrase for that and it went like this, “Man, that hurt my pride.” That's how subtle the shift is.*

*We don't have pride anymore. We’ve got people that say things to us that we get traumatized and we don't feel safe anymore. Again, I don’t want to minimize the reality of abuse. Those things are real. They're very, very real. I'm not talking about that tonight. I'm talking about a prevailing mindset within a culture and that has crept within the church as well, beloved. We don't have pride anymore. “Man, that hurt my ego. Man, that hurt my pride.” That's the stuff we use the say back in the day. I'm not sure if we really believed it, but we said it, and that language has been exchanged for something else. Don't worry, Mike will be back next week.*

***Jeremiah 2:13****. For my people have committed two evils. Number one, they have forsaken Me, right? That's the issue of sin. It’s not just forsaken Me in terms of doing immoral things. That is only part of it, but it is when we choose our own ways, number one, and number two, they’ve hewn for themselves cisterns, these vessels, broken vessels that can hold no water. So, what He’s saying is that the evil is that they forsook God and they began to forge their own path towards satisfaction.*

1. the holy spirit as helper comes and testifies to the world and the church

26“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” (Jn. 15:26)

*Let’s go to page 4. I just want to highlight two things. Jesus says in* ***John 15:26*** *the Holy Spirit is our Helper and He comes to testify to the world and to the church. When the spirit comes to testify, He comes to testify to the world and to the church, and He testifies concerning Jesus. “When the Helper comes Whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”*

*The issue is that, because of sin, the scripture tells us that the unbelieving world, such were we before we met Christ are inwardly dead. Dead in our trespasses. One of the least emphasized and expounded, glorious truth that is available to us is the beauty of the born-again experience, that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we now have the ability to overcome the power of the self-life because God takes residence inside of us.*

***2 Peter 1:2-3****, He says it is His divine power that has us given us everything we need for life, for godliness, here it is, through the knowledge of Him. The Spirit lives inside of us, and through the knowledge of him or instead of saying knowledge of Him, through knowing Him, intimacy with Him, that as we interact with the Lord and we get into that Trinitarian Fellowship that He has been talking about in* ***John 14*** *and a good portion of* ***John 15****, He goes, “When you engage with that the reality, therein comes the release of divine power over the self-life.”*

*It's not something that we do by our own self-effort. There is effort involved, but it’s effort energized by the divine power, the life of God that is released in the place of intimacy and interacting with Him. That’s why intimacy with the Lord is so important. Through the knowledge of Him. The more we get to know Him, as the Spirit reveals to us more things about God, our Spirit gets strengthened. Our hearts get empowered; our self actually dies.*

* 1. To possess life means having the ability and capacity to function, change, sustain, grow, and produce. It is experienced in our physical life, but we are designed to also experience it in our spiritual and emotional life. However, due to sin in the world, humans are inwardly dead.

4But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5even when we were dead in trespasses... (Eph. 2:4)

* 1. The most often neglected and one of the least emphasized and expounded upon truths is the subject of our spiritual union with the Trinity through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. As born-again believers we have become the temple of God who dwells in us—the Holy of Holies.

9... Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared ...” 10But God has revealed them ... through His Spirit... yes, the deep things of God...we have received... the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Cor. 2:9-12)

7But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us ... (2 Cor. 4:7)

* 1. As the Holy Spirit lives in the born-again believer, He is available to bring us into the power of the divine life which comes through the knowledge of God. The Holy Spirit’s primary job is to inwardly help us by testifying—speaking—in us about Jesus and to form Christ in our soul.

14“He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 ﻿All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He ﻿will take of Mine and declare it to you.” (Jn 16:14–15)

* 1. Understanding our union with the Trinitarian Fellowship is the greatest key to understanding the realm of God’s love (Jn. 15:9, 17:23), grace (Jn. 14:6, Col. 3:4) and power (Jn. 14:12). In it we understand that it is the power of God and the life of God given to us to live out His ways.

20“At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” (Jn. 14:20)

3… as His ﻿divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him. (2 Pet. 1:2–3)

* 1. The Spirit also testifies to the world, confronting the veil of darkness by releasing the light of God in the heart and minds of the world, giving them opportunity to respond to the gospel.

8… He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9﻿of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10of righteousness … 11of judgment … (Jn. 16:8-11)

25Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid … (Acts 24:25)

*Do you know how…? Okay. You know how, one of the ways we die to self? One of them, of course, is obeying God’s Word, but there’s a very significant, very key component to dying to self that we don’t think about. We kind of gloss over it. It’s very important. Beloved, it is absolutely essential. I would say it’s the most essential thing out of which everything else flows and it’s this. It is giving ourselves to knowing Him or seeing Him through the Word. The Spirit living in us. Fellowshipping with Him. Interacting with Him. This whole thing that Mike has spoken about over the last couple of years, the “Thank You, show me more.” These simple phrases. There is power that is released in our hearts when we speak simple phrases to the Lord.*

*I’m going to use myself as an example. There are times when I get hit with different emotions, whether they be anxiety, or anger or anguish, whatever it is, and it never ceases to fail me that the moment it rises up, if I, right then and there, take a moment to speak a 5-second phrase to the Lord, it always surprises me. There is always life that touches your heart.*

*Here’s what is important. We die to self when we see God through interacting with Him, because no man can see God and live. We die. Every time we interact with Him. The self-life dies and comes under the leadership of Him. That’s why Jesus told Nicodemus we cannot enter into the kingdom unless we’re born again. God, living inside of us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Interacting with Him, strengthening our hearts to obey His word, and when we fall short we acknowledge it. We confess our sins. We don’t blame shift. We acknowledge, ask the Lord to forgive us, to wash us, to strengthen us, to heal us.*

*Let’s have the worship team come up. So, the Spirit testifies about the glory of God to the church, but paragraph E., He also testifies to the world. When He testifies to the world He confronts the veil of darkness by releasing the light of God upon the heart, giving all men an opportunity to respond gospel. Jesus said that He will come. He will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come. Beloved, when we look at these three things that the Spirit says Jesus would do in relation to the world and we match it up to so much of what is being presented today as the gospel, a lot of it lacks these three things. Sin, righteousness and the judgment to come.*

*It's what Jesus said the Spirit would come and do in relationship to the world, and He says that as He does so would we, insofar as being a witness of the Son of God. I want to point out one more verse. Look at this. I wish I could end this on a higher note, but here you have it.*

***Acts 24:25****. Now he, being Paul, Paul is sitting in front of this governmental leader, and it says, “Now, Paul reasoned with Felix,” here it is, “about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come,” and look what it says: “And Felix was afraid.” That’s what the Spirit does. He comes with the fear of the Lord. It’s what the world needs. Beloved, it’s what you and I need, the Spirit to testify in us, to break the veil off of our minds, to come into fuller agreement with Him and who He is, His assessment, His narrative, His ability.*

*Jesus says, “If you don’t come into agreement with this, you will stumble because you will misinterpret the anger, the resistance of the world.” If the world is mostly wounded people, then we always are going to conclude that when the gospel is presented, and they resist, they’re angry, and they complain, we’re going to conclude it’s our package that needs to change, so then the gospel will continue to adjust and accommodate and adjust and accommodate until it is no longer the gospel, and then it becomes the diet within the body of Christ that will result in many,* ***John 16:1****, that will fall away.*